



Speaking and Listening policy

- Aims:**
- To encourage full and rich language development commensurate with every child's capabilities.*
 - To ensure that each child is provided with opportunities to develop Speaking and Listening skills in a variety of different situations.*
 - To develop the confidence of children in expressing their ideas in an articulate manner.*
 - To ensure that every child develops good listening skills and enjoys the right of being listened to in their turn by peers and adults alike.*

This policy seeks to communicate how we encourage children to develop their skills in all types of social communication techniques and should be cross-referenced with all other Literacy Policies, particularly Drama. As the school is fully Inclusive, it should also be read in conjunction with Policies for Special Educational Needs, Equal Opportunities, Race Equality and Children with Physical Impairment.

Speaking

Talk is the only means that a young child has of expressing him/herself with any degree of complexity beyond the communication of immediate desires. Throughout life speech remains an essential tool for social interaction.

To enable full access to the school curriculum, children need to develop a variety of skills in verbal communication and talk is developed in many ways during the school day. In every classroom, the teacher will plan opportunities for the children to talk to each other, either in focused play situations such as the home corner, through imaginative play with construction kits or other toys and in curriculum situations where the children are encouraged to talk and explore ideas about the task in hand. The computer suite gives particular opportunities for interactive talk whilst being actively engaged on a focused task. At all times in school, children are encouraged to be active and articulate communicators.

Structured talking is encouraged through activities such as making and doing, construction, investigation, news and circle times and drama (see policies for Circle Time and Drama). During each school day there are planned opportunities for focus on talking, with a planned progression in skills which is followed through the school.

The development of appropriate vocabulary to enable access to each area of the curriculum is carefully considered by each group of teachers when planning activities for the school day. Subject-specific and generic language for the situation are introduced from the earliest stages. Progression skills are built into the language the teacher will use when intervening or leading aspects of study with the children.



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Listening

Children learn speech and conversation from the adults around them at all times. Very young children learn the art of conversation by listening to others. This is separate to the process of learning to talk. All adults in the school are very careful to speak in Standard English both to each other and to the children, actively modelling patterns for the children to follow.

Any grammatical mistakes that occur in a child's speech patterns will usually be corrected in the way that adults reply to them (modelling).

In modern society children are constantly surrounded by noise of varying intensities. They therefore need to develop skills in listening. Focused listening is a skill which children need in order to learn. The majority of the school day consists of planned opportunities where children are required to listen carefully and respond to what they have heard, whether in play situations, or during curriculum time.

Being able to hear clearly is vital to the learning process. At the beginning of each child's school career the school medical service will carry out a full examination at which the child's auditory response is assessed. However, young children are prone to suffering temporary hearing loss following a heavy cold. Parents are asked to inform the school immediately if they suspect that their child's hearing is not as good as normal. We can then implement actions such as ensuring that the child is at the front of a group, as even a temporary loss of hearing can seriously affect attainment and progress.

Children with Special Educational Needs have equal access to all areas of the curriculum (see Policies for Equal Opportunities and Children with Physical Impairment). As with all aspects of study, each individual has a different level of response, expertise and learning rate which will affect the results achieved. All children's work is celebrated with this understanding uppermost. All children with Special Needs have an Individual Education Plan which identifies all of the areas where extra help is needed. There is a special section which deals with aspects of language development, where notes of any input from specialist agencies is included. These recommendations can then be incorporated in an individual work programme.

Assessment in school is an ongoing process to determine each child's strengths and weaknesses and support the teacher's understanding of the whole child (see policies for Assessment and Reporting).

Teachers are making constant informal assessments in respect of children's speech and language development and using these judgements to inform their planning. We also aim to maintain good lines of communication with Parents, both on a daily basis, or during our Parent consultation times. In this way we can discuss areas where Parents can help children to develop their skills. Regular formal assessment is central and integral to the process of teaching and learning. Assessments are made of children's attainments in Speaking and Listening skills and a statement is made specifically on this area in the annual Report for Parents, which is issued towards the end of each academic year.



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